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This is a problem which Dr. Kühner seems to have accomplished better than any other grammarian with whose works we are acquainted. The German language approaches the Greek more nearly, in richness and flexibility, than any other modern tongue. It has been so much employed in the most subtle discussions of philosophy and philology; it has such boundless native resources to draw from, when new terms and fresh combinations of words are required for the expression of new and peculiar relations of thought, that a science like that of Greek grammar may be fully and variously developed in it with comparative facility. Dr. Kühner has brought the capacities of his native language to a severe test, in attempting to express the phenomena of Hellenic thought and the most subtle modes of conception, by corresponding expressions and combinations.

The translators of the present work — one of them well known as a learned theologian, and an accomplished scholar, the other as one of the ablest and most promising classical teachers in New England, and earnestly devoted to his profession — have manifested signal power in overcoming the obstacles which lay in their path. They have made a close and faithful version of Kühner, which, where it does not adhere verbally to the original, gives always its spirit and substance, and is at the same time true to the idioms of the English language. The copious illustrations of Kühner are retained, and all his references to the classical authors have been carefully verified. For the analogies adduced in the original, the translators have supplied corresponding analogies from the English, and have sometimes furnished ingenious parallels where none are found in the German.

NOTE

TO ARTICLE I.

WE made a blunder in ascribing the intrigue with Lady Grosvenor to his Majesty, the reigning king of Hanover. It was not "*this* Duke of Cumberland," but his relative and immediate predecessor in bearing the title, whose amour with her Ladyship, in the latter part of the last century, gratified the English love of scandal, and fostered the English respect for rank and royal blood. The mistake is of no importance to the course of our remarks, for the honor of the affair is still *all in the family*.

In our paper on English morals, manners, and poetry, in the present number, we said that the line of epic poets closed with Robert Pollok. We were never more mistaken in our lives;

it ends with John Fitchett. Since that article was printed, we have received from England literary intelligence of the highest importance. We regret extremely, that the steamship which crossed the Atlantic Ocean, freighted with such interesting news, should have been delayed by an adverse fate too long for us to make the great announcement in the body of our article. The epic genius of Britain has risen to the vertical point, —

“his beams at noon
Culminate from the equator,” —

and henceforth he can only descend towards the setting. A new epic poet, of such gigantic dimensions, that the great men of other ages seem dwarfed to pigmies in his presence, has unexpectedly burst, a hundred and thirty thousand verses strong, upon the startled world. The light of his genius has had no dawn, but has blazed forth, like the meridian sun, or the intrusive comet of 1843, with strange fear perplexing the critics. The journals advertise, as just from the press, “*King Alfred, a Poem by John Fitchett*,” six volumes, 8vo.: Pickering, London. All the English magazines are aghast. Editors, unable to curb their impatience, have hastened, before reading the poem through, to give the world the benefit of their partial observations upon this stupendous phenomenon. Mr. Forster, the able and accomplished literary editor of the London *Examiner*, speaks in the following flattering terms of this sudden avatar, this overwhelming avalanche of poetry. “It is contained in six large octavo volumes; each volume comprising eight books of the poem. Each book of the poem has its average of nearly three thousand lines. We have called an experienced accountant to our help, and find that the sum total of lines is one hundred and thirty-one thousand two hundred and thirty-eight. The same authority has ascertained for us, that Homer’s *Iliad* can boast but fifteen thousand six hundred and ninety-three lines; the *Æneid* of Virgil, but nine thousand eight hundred and ninety-five; and the *Paradise Lost* of Milton, no more than ten thousand five hundred and sixty-five. Thus four *Iliads*, four *Æneids*, and four *Paradise Losts* are, summed all together, about the quantity of one *King Alfred*.”

Mr. John Fitchett was a country lawyer. He devoted leisure, fortune, and life to the composition of “*King Alfred*”; resolved, cost what it might, to outdo the immortal work of Joseph Cottle. He was forty years in travelling the great and terrible desert of this epic, — just the time the Israelites were occupied in getting through the wilderness, — and did not reach the promised land of publication, at last. He died in 1838; nor ought any reasonable person to be surprised at the melancholy event.

The volumes are published by his surviving friends, — that any should have survived “King Alfred”! — as a monument to his memory, a *cenotaph* to his fame. The poem was not entirely finished at his lamented demise, but, more fortunate than Virgil, or the famous Londoner, who

“left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,”

he had a friend who took up the tale, — all told to be sure, except the last few pages of the sixth volume, — and without pause or faltering sung it out to the end.

“Cedite Romani scriptores, cedite Graii.”

We regret extremely, that we cannot give our readers a fuller account of this, the last and greatest work of the British epic muse. The English reviewers are so full of wonder and admiration, that they cease to be as perspicuous and didactic as usual. In the midst of their rhapsodies, however, we discern the fact, that the machinery consists of demons, headed by Satan, on the part of the Danes, and of an angelic host which supports Alfred and the English. A writer in the London *Spectator*, by way we suppose of proving him to be a true John Bull of a poet, remarks, that the work shows Mr. Fitchett to have had “not the least idea of the manners of a barbarous age, or of any other.” He then proceeds to quote, with such panegyrical comments as he seems to think the poetry deserved, a lofty description of the portent by which the archangel Michael stops the career of the Danes in the midst of victory. We subjoin only a few lines, by way of whet to our readers’ appetite for the whole, which they will have by and by, if they want it.

“Immediate from the victor host arose
Shrieks horrible of terror and dismay,
Filling heaven’s concave ; shouts and cries succeed,
That stun all ears. Lo ! wondrous to relate,
Suddenly stops the universal mass
In height of victory. Nor the hot pursuit,
Nor lust of battle, claims one wandering thought ;
Sole towards the awful omen each man bends
His *total soul*” ; —

or his *demned total*, as Mr. Mantalini says. The addition of this new and illustrious name to the records of British poetry has been discussed with the respect which so thrilling an event deserved ; and it gives us no common pleasure to inform our readers, that the compass of English epic genius is enlarged to the magic number five. The euphonious *pentade* comprises the great names of Cowley, Glover, Cottle, Pollok, and Fitchett.